



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LITTLE ROCK

Monthly News & Updates

MAY 2025 | VOL. 74 ISSUE 5

May Worship Services

May 4th: "Living Love Through the Practice of Imagination"
Reflections on this month's Soul Matters theme: Imagination

May 11th: "Imagining the Unseen"
Life and the world contain mysteries - things beyond the reach of our senses or at least our experience - that we only perceive indirectly and often can only describe by metaphor. What do we do with that?

May 18th: "The Prophetic Imagination"
What is the role of imagination in working for social justice?

May 25th: Folk Music Sunday
While many friends and members of UUCLR are together for the annual Memorial Day Buffalo River Trip, this Sunday will include an upbeat, informal celebration of folk music through many talented members of our congregation.



CAYRE is back!

*Make way for Children & Youth
Religious Education at UUCLR*

The RE Wing is a busy place these days. For the first time in at least a decade, UUCLR has about two dozen regularly attending children... and the number continues to rise!

There are now two paid nursery staff - Shelby & Chloe. Fin, our DRE, is working to build up a team of volunteer staff who will be ready to keep the CAYRE program growing throughout the 2025-2026 church year. If you'd like to help with RE as a teacher or a volunteer, let us know!

May Forum Topics

May 4th: "Sacredness"
REConnections will join Forum for this session.
Sacred, hallowed, venerated, holy. These are all words to describe things that inspire emotions like respect, reverence, honor, awe. What is sacred to you?

May 11th: 2nd Sunday Guest
Our Share the Plate recipient for May will be the St. Joseph Center of Arkansas. A recent fire destroyed the chapel and disrupted operations in major ways. [Read more...](#)

**Learn more about
CAYRE at UUCLR**

May 18th: "How I Came to be a UU"
Elaine Gimblet will share her story.

May 25th: "What's on Your Mind?"
Hosted by Clyde Bailey



LGBTQ

Welcoming Congregation

Upcoming Events

**May 4th - New Member Recognition
Town Hall #2
1st Sunday Book Exchange & Recycling**

May 5th - Between the Lines Book Club (meets on the first Monday of each month at 7pm in Perhson)

May 11th - Vegetarian Potluck (Mehta Wing) Bring a little bit extra in honor of Mothers Day!

May 13th - Young at Heart (11:45 in the Mehta Wing)
Young at Heart will celebrate everyone's birthdays this month with a special birthday party. Pizza and Strawberry shortcake is on the menu.

**May 17th - CUUPS: Paganism 101 2nd Session
Small Group Dinners** (offsite, 6:30pm)

May 18th - Freethinkers (Mehta Wing, 1:00pm)

**May 20th - UUCLR Board Mtg & Special Election
Our House Meal Service Night**

May 23rd-26th - Memorial Day Buffalo Trip

May 30th - Short Stories Discussion Group (meets the last Friday of each month at noon in Perhson)

**NOTE: There will be no Parents NightOut!
or LUUnch Out! events in May.**

June 1st - Annual Congregational Meeting (after service, lunch and childcare provided)

View the online calendar to see times and locations of all the upcoming May events.

**UUCLR
Calendar**



What a crew!

Grounds work days make play days possible.

Attendees of the April workday spanned seven decades! Work included privet control, removing the crepe myrtle cuttings, and much more. With the children utilizing the woodland area each week, workdays are crucial to keeping the grounds not only beautiful, but in safe condition. Look for a pop up work day sometime in May!



SAVE THE DATE: JUNE 1st

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on June 1st after service in the Mehta Wing. All members and friends are invited and encouraged to attend this business session. Members of UUCLR will be asked to sign in and claim a voting card to be used throughout the meeting.



Childcare will be provided in the RE Wing. A light lunch will be provided to all (kids & adults) in the Mehta Wing prior to the meeting's start.

The 2024-2025 Annual Report will be available later this month, both digitally and in print.

NOTICE OF ELECTION: President Elect Vacancy

Rebecca Roetzel was elected as our President Elect for the '24-25 church year but was required to resign when she became our Church Administrator. The Nominating and Leadership Committee has presented Laurie Smith Prud'homme to the board as their nominee. An election will be held at the next Board Meeting scheduled for May 20 at 7pm in Pehrson. **The Board will accept nominations from the floor at the Board meeting in person or via zoom.**

The Paganism 101 course began on April 12th with about two dozen registrants. It will continue for the remainder of the calendar year. While registration for this session is closed, CUUPS hopes to offer this course again in the next church year. The curriculum - A Unitarian Exploration of the New Paganism - has been in use and revised by Unitarians in Vancouver since 1998.

The 2nd session of this course will be held on Saturday, May 17th from 11am-2pm.

[Click here to learn more about CUUPS!](#)

REFLECTIONS FROM REV. PAUL

“The Spoils”

I remember that in 2017, the décor in the Oval Office prominently featured a portrait of Andrew Jackson. What did that mean? Why would so very partisan a Republican president feature a traditional hero of the opposing party so prominently?

Jackson's reputation has suffered in recent years: few today admire his mercurial temper or, especially, his Indian removal policy. At the time, some read Jackson's portrait as a sort of anti-woke signal (the president lifting up what the “woke” were putting down). But all things considered, I think it more likely that the portrait signaled the president's admiration of one other thing Jackson was famous for: his use of the “Spoils System.” Not content to dole out federal jobs to those who campaigned for him, Jackson had an unofficial cadre of advisors nicknamed his “kitchen cabinet” who implemented his policies outside the official structures of the government. Jackson didn't invent the “Spoils System,” but his extravagant use of it attracted notice and criticism. During the Civil War, Republicans used the system to their advantage, and afterward a faction of the party – called “the stalwarts” – championed it as the most efficient way to get things done. Those who criticized it were maligned with an originally racist epithet: “half-breeds” – not *real* Republicans. The crisis of this party division came in 1880. The party's competing candidates were Ulysses S. Grant for the “stalwarts,” and John Sherman for the “half-breeds.” In an unintended triumph of political rhetoric - following NY Senator Roscoe Conkling's impassioned nominating speech for Grant that drew wild cheers and extended chants of “Grant!” – James Garfield delivered a calm but stirring nominating speech for Sherman, after which came the chant: “Garfield!” Soon after his inauguration, Garfield was shot by a man who had given one speech for him and thought therefore he deserved a federal job. The shock of this event created political conditions that birthed the federal civil service. Garfield's vice president, Chester Arthur, was a protégé of Conkling chosen to smoothe things over between the party factions. Nevertheless, he told Conkling, “For the vice presidency I am indebted to you, but for the presidency I am indebted to God,” and by 1883 he had gotten civil service reform through Congress and ended the “Spoils System.” Federal jobs now required candidates with merit and skills.

And here we are, watching its return.

That first civil service protection law was written by a Democrat, George Pendleton, who felt that the “Spoils System” had made the civil service too elitist. That, in effect, is the current charge against a civil service of merit and skill. “Executive overreach,” they call it. Once again, the tell is in the accusation. It is executive overreach that now threatens our freedoms.





Community Cafe @ McDermott

As part of the McDermott Elementary community, we're invited to the Community Cafe events which are held quarterly. **The May 1st gathering is from 6:00-7:30pm** and will be the final one of this school year. They'll be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs served with great sides. Bring your appetite and enjoy an evening of food, games, and giveaways. This is a free event and a great way to deepen connections with our community school!

Annual Buffalo River Memorial Day Trip



It's almost here!

The annual Buffalo River Memorial Day trip is May 23-26. There will be lots of outdoor fun and fellowship. Day visitors are welcome on Saturday and Sunday. Check with Zenyth about remaining camping spots - check with James about indoor lodging options. If you have general questions, please contact Zenyth (zenythp@msn.com) for more information.

Can You Help on May 27?

Submitted by Nell Matthews



Volunteers are needed to move all the food pantry equipment out of Stephens Elementary and setting up at McDermott on Tuesday, May 27. A U Haul truck will be at Stephens at 11 AM to pick up the chest freezer, the two shelving units and five carts. Those items plus three shelving units, storage tubs, and igloo ice chests will be transported to McDermott Elementary.

Volunteers should plan to be at Stephens by **10:45 AM** and at McDermott by **11:45 AM**. Please contact Nell Matthews if you can help. We are a small but mighty crew but we are also over 70 years of age!

Thus we begin a new chapter of helping families in Little Rock, focusing on our neighborhood school, just down the road from the church. UUCLR member Sky Brower is the community liaison at McDermott and is so happy that we are taking on this project. Principal Pamela Dial has also welcomed us because she sees great need in the McDermott community.

Please help us move. Contact Nell at uucrlnell@gmail.com or 501 563-6734.



Board President's Message

Submitted by Debbie Goolsby

I feel certain that many of you are feeling the same constant anxiety that I feel most days. As I start each day, it seems there is yet another unbelievable action being taken by our current administration. All this chaos and uncertainty makes me even more appreciative of all of you. It is such a comfort to come to UUCLR to be with you, share some loving and peaceful time together, get some much needed hugs and then go back into the world.

And thanks to so many of you who are taking civic action by showing up at protests and calling your representatives—such important work! Many of you that showed up for the “work day” and many helped with the cooking, set-up, take-down, clean-up and other things involved with our annual Fellowship Dinner. Many hands....

We all know that our youth RE program is growing right before our eyes. I hope that all our new families are aware that we are struggling a bit to keep up with the pace—the sudden influx has caught us a bit off guard and we are trying our best to adjust and offer everyone the best opportunities for your families. Please be patient with us. Remember, if you can help with our youth program by spending even 1 Sunday a month, please let Fin know. That would be a great service to our congregation!

Our annual meeting is coming up on Sunday, June 1 after church. This the time when our congregation makes time to elect new officers for our board and tends to special business. We will be voting to approve newly updated By-Laws and other governing documents that are VERY important to the life of UUCLR. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with our proposed budget for next year and to review the documents. Your church leaders have spent countless hours on these documents that effect the life of UUCLR, so I hope you will do your part and participate in the process.

Happy May everyone!
-Debbie Goolsby



April Board Report

The UUCLR Board's April meeting took place on 4/15/25.

The work of the Board this month was spent finalizing the budget for our upcoming year and reviewing the work of the Governing Documents Committee. The Stewardship Committee has been hard at work to complete our pledge drive so that the Board would know “what is possible” for next year. We did spend some time hearing reports regarding the progress of starting OWL classes and the upcoming Buffalo River Event.

Thank you to all our board members for putting in the extra time needed this month!

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Tuesday, May 20th

New Member Recognition



We are excited to welcome Barrett Goodwin, Jessi Johnson, Christie Nichols, Joey Ben-Hanan'a Lenz, and Keith Ben-Hanan'a-Lenz (and Falkor!) to the UUCLR community.

Keep an eye on the bulletin boards in Thomson Hall for more information about our newest members.

Caring Concern: Michael Dees

We are sad to share that Michael Dees passed away on March 29th, 2025 at the age of 71. He and his wife, Donna Stein, were members of UUCLR before moving to Oregon.

There is currently no online obituary available.



Register or Donate

Walking for Leanna

On May 10th in Hot Springs, there will be a walkraising awareness of Angelman syndrome and essential funds for Angelman research and family support programs. You are personally invited to join in the cause by the Bean family and their daughter, Leanna, one of our regular RE kids.

May Birthdays

Greta Robinson.....	2
Anna Mattei.....	6
Deirdre Lee.....	7
Margot Cameron.....	8
Dianne Scott.....	14
Mindy Morrell.....	15
Claire McCullough.....	17
Gail Roberson.....	18
Hannah Scott.....	20
Nancy Hamlin.....	22
Amanda Golbeck.....	25
John Althoff.....	26
Monica Clark-Robinson.....	26

Stay Connected!

Are you getting all the news you need from UUCLR? We have several ways of communicating!

- Friday Email Blast**
- Sunday Morning Email Blast**
- Sunday Order of Service Insert**
- Bulletin Boards (Thomson & RE Wing)**
- Outer Circle - Monthly Newsletter**
- New! - Parent GroupMe Chat**
- Website - www.uuclr.org**
- Facebook - /UUCLR**

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Rev. Paul Beedle
Contact for appointment.

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WORSHIP ARTS TEAM LEAD:
Laurie Smith Prud'homme

FACILITIES TEAM LEAD:
Bill Kimpel

GROUNDS TEAM LEAD:
Joanne Kriehn

MEMORIAL WOODLANDS:
Sharon Marcum

FAITH IN ACTION & CARING TEAM:
Sue McDonald

FELLOWSHIP TEAM LEAD:
Kater Reynolds

MEMBERSHIP LEADS:
Cas Rifkin & Lisa Brents

FORUM COORDINATOR:
Jan Bowen

RE-QUESTORS COORDINATOR:
Joe Meehan

RECONNECTIONS COORDINATOR:
Zenyth Propst

CUUPS COORDINATOR:
Stephanie Webb

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR:
Rebecca Roetzel

HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM LEADS:
Phil Peters & Sherman James

TECHNOLOGY TEAM LEAD:
Scott Lee



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